

TELCON

President/Kissinger

12:20 pm 12/9/70

P: Nothing new today before I go to the EOB?

K: No, there's nothing of any consequence. I am looking for my folder. No, the Pakistani election came out in a way that Yahya didn't want. The autonomous party got a large vote in East Pakistan and B_____ in Cambodia. (this is last is what was said but I think HAK was referring to the Pakistani election still and it was a slip.)

P: He still has control of the Constitution.

K: Not unless he uses strong arm methods. (something about East Pakistan vs. West Pakistan) So he cannot fool with the parties as he wanted. In Cambodia the communists have started an attack and have beaten up Cambodia. Perhaps we should have an airlift of the area. It's best to start our offensive or we will be in a rescue operation.

P: In the paper there was something about Cambodians doing well.

K: I don't know what it referred to. It was put out in Phnom Penh.

P: We know what our facts are. No question of going forward if we can get them to do it.

K: I have talked to Laird and Moorer.

P: That is it? They are with us? How about Abrams?

K: I think so. We are getting additional intelligence.

P: Where would it go?

K: The rubber plantation in the general area of the Fish Hook where we were last year.

P: Are there North Vietnamese there?

K: It's the tip of their offensive. The good one is the one Haig will look into and they are making the plans on.

P: We have to do both. This is the tip of the communist offensive?

K: It's the tip where they go from the jungles to the plains. If we could set them back a bit but it's mostly a despoiling operation. Should be able to do some within the week.

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P: In the meantime it's ? ? ? a psychological turn around.

K: I had a fascinating cable from Ladd about the press which confirms what you said. He thinks they are physiologically and psychologically sick. They don't lie but select the facts in such a way that makes it sound that the leaders have a vested interest in defeat. He briefs them regularly and thinks it's hopeless. He makes (or lacks) analysis. Show a strong operation and not putting much in there. On such limits we are . These are ~~not~~ in response to the ~~clippings~~ ^{clippings} ~~clippings~~ last week.

P: Is Swank doing better then the other guy?

K: That talk you had with him in San Clemente was very helpful. And it's helped turn the State Dept. around because Marshall Green won't go against his own Ambassador. The had the vote on Guinea and we abtained.

~~Kxx~~ P: I saw that.

K: That's not major.

P: With regard to the Cambodian thing, any question about Moorer knowing about the urgency I put on this problem?

K: Absolutely not and I will call him again immediately.

P: Any air needed, put it in there. On the infiltration, maybe you have to bang earlier.

K: If the air lift is undertaken we may be to fly the planes for it.

~~P.~~ No. That should be avoided. See what they can do on their own for a change. ~~That~~ ~~They~~ will open a ~~xxxxx~~ whole can of worms.

K: I favor the ground offensive over hte airlift because we don't want SVN unit trapped up there.

P. Make sure they are going at break neck speed. Hit them before they hit us.

K: Mel is aboard.

P: How about another strike at the choke points? It's not fiddle - dee-dee ~~this~~ as before.

K: We should wait on the choke points until after we have Laos completed because ~~xxxxxx~~ it's most effective with that. The difficulty is that the grounds

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K: (cont) are wet so they must dry out a little before we can start the ground offensive so they can only trap a group here and there.

P: They could ? ? ? ?

K: 100 people. Lack of ability and leadership but they fight well. NVN casualties are substantial.

P: South Vietnamese too. How about having Ladd back over here and have a talk with him? Have him come back with Haig. He needs time off, he's (been working very hard).

K: You never met him.

P: Never at all and I should talke with him. We are not going to loose this at this point. I don't want Americans on the ground in the north (?) but we will do anything else. Bombing, whatever. They finally got under Bill's skin yesterday. ~~★~~ They crack him ~~★~~ too hard, he hits back.

K: He is very tough. Much more then Mel. The dinner last night had a nice human touch.

P: Means more to him than a division. That we care about him.

K: The story you told at the end was very touching.

P: They should get that out sometime.

K: I did the taping for the TODAY show yesterday and said a lot of what you do. They questions were very sympathetic. They will ~~launch~~ run it several mornings two weeks from now. Questions on how you work, etc.

P: They like that. They are more interested in the man. On Cambodia thing, it was ~~good~~ good that Bill slapped back and said we are not telling you the plans. It's about time someone said it. We constantly get this on our credibility gap. What do you hear?

K: I don't think it's a problem. The people opposed to you are opposed because they understand your program but they are opposed. Who today can remember what exactly ? ? ? ? the Hanoi led. Laird has a tendency to be clever but those are marginal problems. There is no credibility problem except among people opposed to us anyway.

P: Fulbright was a great laugh because he said he had reason to know that the Administration knew before the raid there were no prisoners there.

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K: That's plain sick.

P: Why risk 60 men.

K: We could have done more damage with 4 bombs then with the whole raid.

P: The other way he put it was that we knew that the enemy knew. If they had known, there would be 60 ~~more~~ more dead Americans.

K: It's absurd!

P: It's typical of the credibility gap thing. So let's keep the WH staff informed. They get badgered by the press more. We have to constantly do it. On Cambodia I get back to the fact for to win it. ~~Explain~~ Do they both understand?

K: Yes. I talked with them after dinner last night. They are doing a first draft and I will talk to them.

P: South Vietnam will bomb in there. Tactical air and knock the hell out of them. Combined with ~~major~~ major strike. _____ is a pretty big month. It can only mean that they need them.

K: They cannot replace the losses we consumed. If they keep up at this level they are pointing towards a major offensive. They are probably planning a wallop against Cambodia but not South Vietnam -- They can't do enough damage.

P: We are doing nothing?

K: That's what we are sending Haig out there for. So Abrams will know ~~that~~ that you want him to launch ~~some~~ spoiling operations.

P: Get a message to Abrams from me on this point. Not from you or Laird or Moorer but from me.

K: This minute.

P: It's of urgent importance and I have asked Haig to discuss it and it should be done now. I don't need to see it. Good-by, Henry.